



## ***Chief of Staff Captain Tim Giardina***

SEVENTH Fleet Families,

As I write this, we are completing our port visit to Shanghai, China. I think everyone was amazed by what a great place it was to visit. The food, sightseeing and shopping were all truly superb. As well, it was diplomatically very important for the SEVENTH Fleet to interact with our Chinese counterparts. These types of visits, in the spirit of friendship, are essential parts of the United States and China developing a better relationship, based on trust and common interests. The logistics of traveling to China were a little daunting, so I know that not many of you were able to join your spouses and loved ones. I hope that you all will be compensated with gifts from China, where it seems that everything that is manufactured was available from a street vendor or in one of the thousands of tiny shops and stalls that are crammed into every street.

With Shanghai behind us, we are now looking forward both to our Tiger Cruise and our return home. I've gotten a few questions about the Tiger Cruise and the Nagoya visit, so I'll do my best to be as clear as I can here, without talking about actual dates. Firstly, spouses and significant others are welcome guests at the 'Big Top' reception in Nagoya. However, the 'Big Top' is not an appropriate event for children, as alcoholic beverages are served there. For Tiger Cruise participants, we intend to offer the option of embarking either the night before or on the morning of the underway. This will provide flexibility for those who either want to see the sights of Nagoya at night, or who might, alternatively, want to save the expense of a hotel room the night prior to our underway. I will provide specific guidance through the Ombudsmen separately, but I expect that there will be a window of time the afternoon/evening before when Tigers can check in. On the night before underway, the Tigers will be required to meet normal Tiger Cruise requirements—namely that their sponsor and co-sponsor, if the Tiger is not the same gender as the sponsor—must be on the ship with the Tiger. There will similarly be a block of time on the morning of the underway available to check in. Once the Tigers check in, then they and their sponsor(s) will be required to remain on the ship until we return to Yokosuka. This is especially important to note for those checking in the night before. One final note: Embarking the night of the 'Big Top' will not be an option, since it is not in close proximity to our underway. These guidelines are being crafted in the interest of balancing flexibility with the requirements to maintain safety and accountability for our guests while following the necessary rules governing Tiger Cruises.

I have passed the Ombudsmen some information about Nagoya and hotels. I had some feedback that any available rooms were prohibitively expensive, owing to the Nagoya visit happening in conjunction with other cultural events in the area. We had some research done, and the results indicate that the hotel situation is not so desperate. The Ombudsmen will circulate data about some lower-priced lodging options (although nothing is 'cheap' in Japan), which I hope will allow more families to participate.

I hope to see as many of you as possible for the Tiger Cruise. We at SEVENTH Fleet truly owe a large debt of gratitude to Captain Steve Maynard and his crew. They are organizing the Tiger Cruise just prior to going into an intensive maintenance period, and they have been very accommodating in trying to make this a big success. Their attitude indicates the great performance that was recently recognized by their winning a second consecutive Battle Efficiency 'E' as the most outstanding ship in COMPHIBGRUONE. Additionally, we also recently learned that BLUE RIDGE won the prestigious Ney award, recognizing them as having the best Food Service operation in their size category. That means the Tigers can look forward to eating well while they are with us. Please offer congratulations to your counterparts for their excellent work, which directly supports the SEVENTH Fleet mission.

I look forward to seeing you either in Nagoya, or when we make our return home to Yokosuka.

Warmest Regards,  
Tim Giardina



## ***Seventh Fleet Master Chief Ashley Smith***

I hear that the weather is cold back there in Yokosuka, sure isn't that way here in the South China Sea. We are enjoying some of that nice Balmy weather, coming from that Cold Shanghai weather. This has been one of the most interesting deployments for the SEVENTH Fleet staff. In a little over a month we have gone from Yokosuka to Kuala Lumpur on to Sattahip Thailand and from there to Okinawa and then to Shanghai China. I believe that the staff has been able to get ashore and enjoy the sites and shopping that these countries afford. Now that's some hard Duty!! So as not to make it sound like nothing but a liberty Cruise we have been conducting considerable training and hosting many tours and Big Top Receptions for the Officials of the host countries. I'm sure that everyone is aware that Tax Season is upon us, and that NLSO in Yokosuka is offering free Tax Preparation. This is a wonderful service and it's right on base!!

Well that's about all I can think of for now. Take Care and watch out for each other.

Ashley Smith  
Command Master Chief  
SEVENTHFLT